

# Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission

## MEETING MINUTES #22

March 8, 2021

### Attendance

David Armenti	X	Kirkland Hall	—
Iris Barnes	X	Elizabeth Hughes	X
Simone Barrett	X	Elgin Klugh	X
DaNeen Brown	—	Gary Norman	X
Jacqueline Bullock	X	Carl Snowden	X
Charles Chavis	X	Marshall Stevenson	—
Nick Creary	X		
Roger Davidson	—	Zenita Hurley	X
Maya Davis	X	Kristin McFarlane	X
Omar Eaton-Martinez	X	Will Schwarz	X
David Fakunle	X	Sonya Osei	—
Chris Haley	X		

X = Present

**Members of the public present:** Tim Baker, Ailish Hopper, Virginie Ladisch, Emily Oland Squires, Ashley Quarcoo

### Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dr. David Fakunle at 11.35a. Mr. Schwarz called the roll of Commissioners and Staff.

### Approval of Meeting Minutes:

The minutes from meeting of February 8 were approved unanimously with no revisions.

### Public Comments

The Chair asked if any members of the public wished to make a comment and there were no responses.

### Sub-committee Reports

#### Logistics - Commissioner Maya Davis

- The subcommittee met most recently on February 17, 2021 with some members of the MD Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC) present as guests

- It is hoped that the MCAAHC will assist with logistics and preparations for public hearings, particularly in the four counties where there currently is no known active coalition
- The next meeting of the Logistics subcommittee will be on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 11a. Login information will be posted on the MLTRC website
- Mr. Schwarz noted the expectation that public hearings will begin in September 2021 and urged Commissioners who had not yet made contact with the coalitions for which they are the assigned liaisons to do so as soon as possible. The time before hearings begin can be used to become familiar with the historic lynchings that will be investigated, resources and materials available, possible hearing sites, coalition activities, local sensitivities, etc.

#### **Research - Commissioner Elgin Klugh**

- The subcommittee last met on February 27, 2021
- Commissioner Klugh indicated his desire to pass responsibility of chairing the subcommittee to Commissioner Armenti (who has indicated his willingness to accept the assignment) and asked if this can be done by agreement between them and other members of the subcommittee or whether or not a vote of the full Commission is required. Commission Counsel will be consulted for the answer to that question
- The subcommittee is working on a mechanism to highlight, compile and incorporate research already performed by outside and independent sources into the Commission. He stressed the desire to credit those responsible for the work

#### **Reconciliation – Commissioner Charles Chavis**

- Representatives of the Salisbury Lynching Memorial Task Force (Wicomico County) attended the subcommittee’s most recent meeting and discussed plans for its upcoming historic marker installation and associated activities. The installation will take place on Saturday, May 22, 2021
- The subcommittee is identifying additional coalitions for subsequent meetings
- Plans are being made for holding workshops on historical trauma, reconciliation and healing. Details will be forthcoming

#### **New Business**

- Commissioner Davis announced she is taking a new position with the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission and will thus no longer serve as the designated Commissioner from the Maryland State Archives on the MLTRC. However Dr. Tamara Wilson has indicated her wish for Ms. Davis to take Dr. Wilson’s place on the MLTRC as the representative of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, so Ms. Davis will continue to serve on the MLTRC
- Mr. Tim Baker, Director of the Maryland State Archives (MSA), announced that with Ms. Davis’ change of employment, the designated representative of the MSA on the MLTRC will be Mr. Chris Haley

- Chair Fakunle announced that Maria Lok, a scholar from the University of Copenhagen, has written a paper about the MLTRC which he will distribute via email for subsequent discussion, comments and suggestions
- Commissioner Snowden asked about the status of the press release that had been prepared in cooperation with the MCAAHC. Chair Fakunle indicated the desire to incorporate some acknowledgement of the January 6 insurrection into the statement. Commissioner Snowden added that the trial of Derek Chauvin (currently on trial for killing George Floyd) should perhaps also be recognized in the statement. Chair Fakunle agreed and said he will be in touch with MCAAHC to expedite the joint statement
- Commissioner Barrett reported that Morgan State University has an IRB that can review and sign off on relevant aspects which may be required by the Emmett Till Grant

### Announcements

- Commissioner Armenti noted that the Maryland Center for History and Culture is holding public programs of interest, including a panel discussion he will moderate and which will include Commissioners Fakunle, Davis and Mr. Schwarz. The goal of the panel is to introduce the work the Commission and the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project (MLMP) and discuss goals moving forward. Information and registration are here:  
<https://www.mdhistory.org/calendar/finding-truth-healing-and-reconciliation-the-history-of-lynchings-in-maryland/>
- Commissioner Armenti said a teacher workshop that will cover much of the same material will be held on April 24, 2021 and will provide teachers with primary sources, lesson plans and advice on teaching this content. Information and registration is available here:  
<https://www.mdhistory.org/calendar/virtual-teacher-workshop-lynching-in-maryland/>
- Mr. Schwarz announced that, in cooperation with the Equal Justice Initiative, there will be ceremonies to install two historic markers in May:
  - Saturday, May 8 in Towson to commemorate the 1885 lynching of 15-year old Howard Cooper. An appeal for a posthumous pardon has been made to Governor Larry Hogan and it is hoped that pardon may be issued at or before the ceremony
  - Saturday, May 22 in Salisbury to commemorate the lynchings of Garfield King in 1898, Matthew Williams and an unknown victim in 1931
- Mr. Schwarz noted that MLMP is a sponsor of the Transitional Justice in the USA speaker series being presented by the New England School of Law. The content is particularly relevant to the work of the Commission. The next program in the series is on "How we build collaborative models for a transitional justice process", and will take place on **Wednesday, March 24th**, from **4:30-6:00pm**
  - Ashley Quarcoo, who will moderate the March 24 program, was in attendance at the MLTRC meeting. She is Senior Fellow, Democracy, Conflict and Governance Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace & Visiting Fellow, SNF Agora Institute at John Hopkins. She

briefly described the next session and invited all to register and attend the free program. Information and registration is available here:

[https://nelboston.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_JFvg9BGRBa-MzZIuzObgg](https://nelboston.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_JFvg9BGRBa-MzZIuzObgg)

- Commissioner Omar Eaton-Martinez noted that the MD National Capital Park and Planning Commission's "Giving Voice Initiative" is holding a symposium on April 8 that will feature a talk by Dr. Betty Kears, author of "The Other Madisons: The Lost History of a President's Black Family"
- Commissioner Haley recommends a new Netflix series, "Amend" about the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution (Equal Protection). He noted that Episode 2 is of particular interest as it takes on the subject of lynching and features appearances by Sherrilyn Ifill (LDF), Martha Jones (Johns Hopkins) and historian Christopher Bonner (UMD) among other notables
- Commissioner Davis announced she will be speaking about the MLTRC to the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project on March 17 at 4p. Information and registration is available at:  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/crrj-workshop-series-maryland-lynching-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-tickets-144098411227>
- Mr. Schwarz noted that the controversial Red Maple Place project in Towson had been approved earlier in the hour. It is a large affordable housing project that would be placed in the middle of Historic East Towson, a historic Black community that dates to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and was founded by freed slaves from the nearby Hampton Mansion. It is opposed by the community and the decision is expected to be appealed

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12.20p.